

**Colusa Subreach Planning Project Advisory Workgroup
Draft Meeting Summary
March 6, 2006 10:00 AM - 2:00 PM
Granzella's Inn
Willows, CA**

**Summary prepared by Carolyn Penny, Facilitator, Common Ground: Center for
Cooperative Solutions with assistance from Ellen Gentry, Sacramento River
Conservation Area Forum**

***Note: The next AW meeting will be held April 3 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., location to be
announced.***

Present:

AW: Don Anderson, Burt Bundy, Denny Bungarz, Mike Fehling, John Garner, Armand Gonzales, Kelly Moroney, Brendan Reed (alternate for Rebecca Fris)

Staff: Michelle Baker (Common Ground), Ellen Gentry (SRCAF), Facilitator Carolyn Penny (Common Ground), Project Manager Gregg Werner (TNC)

Guests: Butch Hodgkins, Ladybug (Maureen) Doherty, Pat Kittle, Joan Phillipe

Agenda:

<u>Agenda Item</u>	<u>Approximate Start Time</u>	<u>Lead Person</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Outcome</u>
1.	10:00	Carolyn Penny, Facilitator	Welcome, Introductions, Agenda Review, January Meeting Summary	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Introductions. Approve agenda and meeting flow. Approve January summary.
2.	10:20	Gregg Werner, All AW Members	Status of the Advisory Workgroup	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Discuss recent actions and future directions.
3.	10:50	Public	Public Comment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Receive comment.
4.	11:05	Gregg Werner, All AW Members	Updates on Subcommittee work and status of planning and research projects; AW Timeline	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Gain an update on the Subcommittee efforts, research projects, and next steps.• Discuss AW Timeline and upcoming dates.
5.	11:35	Public	Public Comment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Receive comment.
6.	11:50		Lunch and break	

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7.	12:20	Greg Golet, All AW Members	Baseline Analysis Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Review and discuss the Ward, Stegeman, and 1000-Acre Tracts Baseline Analyses.
8.	1:30	Public	Public Comment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Receive comment.
9.	1:45	Carolyn Penny, All AW Members	Next Agenda and Next Steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Shape next agenda; articulate next steps
10.	2:00		Adjourn	

Review of January Meeting Summary

The January meeting summary was accepted as written.

Status of Advisory Workgroup

Gregg Werner gave an overview of the recent history of the AW including Ben Carter's statement to the SRCAF Board, the Colusa County Board of Supervisors resolution (December 13, 2005), and the SRCAF appointment of a special committee regarding landowner assurances. Brendon Flynn, a Tehama County farmer, is chair of that subcommittee. A draft landowner assurance policy is expected before the SRCAF Board in March.

Gregg stated that he sent a letter to the SRCAF Board to clarify TNC's role in the purchase and resale of property in regard to public funds. Gregg stated that TNC does not charge the government twice. Kelly Moroney affirmed that USFWS has not paid for any purchase from TNC since his arrival. Denny Bungarz mentioned that TNC pays property taxes on the land it owns, and often at a rate higher than the prior landowner paid.

Gregg referred to a February 8, 2006 letter to SRCAF in which eight AW members withdrew from membership. A resolution similar to the one in Colusa County was put before the Glenn County supervisors and not passed. A revised resolution is scheduled to go before the Glenn County Board of Supervisors on March 7.

John Garner joined the conversation inquiring whether funding is affected by the Colusa County resolution since the effort is a planning effort. He stated that he would like to see the studies move forward if funding is available. He stated that landowner input is important as the work moves forward.

Brendan Reed responded that the effort is a planning effort, that funds continue, and that the studies will constitute very important tools for decision-making at the local level. Gregg added that the recreation planning effort includes a public input process and that conversations with adjoining landowners will continue. He stated that the contracts in regard to the studies are either already completed and signed – or are expected to be completed and signed the week of March 13. Burt Bundy added that the SRCAF

Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) is another venue for landowner input. He stated that the SRCAF Board directed him to continue with his involvement with the AW. John added that he hopes the hydraulic analysis will provide some important information to address public concerns in regard to flooding.

Armand asked whether the former AW members would return if a Good Neighbor Policy were in place. He suggested that the AW consider delaying decisions if that were feasible. Gregg noted that there is a built-in pause in regard to the flow of the studies because the next round of decisions is expected next fall and winter. Brendan stated that the AW could reassess the status of local input and, if desired, create alternate involvement avenues before the next round of significant decisions.

Gregg reviewed the updated quarterly schedule for CSP. Brendan agreed with the assessment; decisions have been made, crucial decisions will be made again later and reengagement of public participation can be reassessed at that time. Armand asked for an affirmation from the Board that they want CSP to continue. Burt Bundy stated updates are done regularly and he can make a point to speak to it directly.

Public Comment

Butch Hodgkins stated that it is hard to understand fully the landowner assurances conflict due to his distance from the dynamics. He noted the legitimacy of the landowner frustrations and suggested that the AW consider trying to address and acknowledge those issues. With \$2 to 6 billion in bonds on the table, he described an incentive to further these important efforts.

Joan Phillipe stated that her City Council is in support of the Good Neighbor Policy (GNP) and landowners as well as appreciation of benefits from the AW-launched analyses. She indicated that she expects the City of Colusa and possibly others will return to the AW table if the majority of the GNP is adopted.

Ladybug Doherty encouraged the AW to understand the frustration with the GNP process and look for ways to deal with those challenges.

AW Subcommittee Updates

John apologized for not making the tensions and conflict more clear in regard to the landowner assurances issues. He described two parts to the landowner assurances efforts. The first part is about Endangered Species Act (ESA) exemption for neighboring landowners after habitat is restored. Because of the connection to legislation and law, this part of the concern is harder to negotiate. The second part of the landowners assurances effort is about issues such as predation due to habitat restoration and trespass. This part of the concern presents more opportunities for the parties to work out a solution. Burt agreed that the GNP deals with both ESA issues and management practices issues.

Gregg Werner reported the LIDAR topographic photography worked out well before plants leafed out and the river cooperated by dropping to include the gravel bars. Hydraulic analysis has been approved and there will be contract with Ayres next week.

He reported Fran Borcalli's approval of his peer review contract. Large woody debris (LWD) inventory will be done when the water is lower; it is now underwater and moving downstream. The review of existing capacity will look at flow capacity, seepage, LWD and the effects of proposed restoration effects. The two dimensional model should provide the best information available for the Reclamation Board. The recreation planning contract will be submitted to EDAW within the next week. Reviewing access and the master plan for expanding recreation on the Ward property and modification for boat ramp facility is being done. Pest and regulatory effects are being reviewed by CALFED, will probably be approved this week and contracted within two weeks. The fiscal and economic effects regarding local taxing agencies will be focused on Colusa County. Suggestions of those involved are requested. Economic Planning Systems has signed the contract. Denny Bungarz recommended David Gallo at Chico State. John Garner recommended Farm Production Credit. Don Anderson recommended the agricultural commissioner. .

John Garner asked if the boat ramp committee is still intact. Joan Phillipe said it was and submitting for a \$3.1 million grant. Brendan Reed asked if the CALFED contract has been amended. Gregg Werner said no, TNC will submit a request to extend the grant at the next quarterly process. Brendan noted the amendment workshop is being held in May. After July 1 the grant will move to Fish and Game. The submission date for amendments is March 10.

Public Comment

Butch asked where the economic impact of predation and permitting was covered in the AW analyses. Gregg responded that the analysis of pest and regulatory effects by EDAW will examine the impacts of predation and regulation. The analysis will include whether there is an effect and, if so, mitigation options.

John stated that the goal is to end up with a process that builds in advance conversation on impacts and mitigation. Burt referred to the SRCAF project review process that has both an advance dialogue and a follow-up conversation. He mentioned that the GNP under development will include a dispute resolution process. Denny affirmed that the first step of a good process is one-on-one problem-solving by neighbors.

Baseline Analysis Review: Ward, Stegeman, and 1000-Acre Properties

Since Greg Golet is sick with pneumonia, Gregg Werner gave a PowerPoint presentation of the highlights of the baseline analysis for the Ward, Stegeman, and 1000-Acre properties. The Baseline Assessment reports included: scientific information building blocks for restoration planning developed by scientists from CSU Chico; initial recommendations as to what plant communities the site can support; and recommendations subject to refinement based on new topographic and inundation information, hydraulic modeling input, and adjustments to minimize conflicts and financial considerations. Components included: surrounding land uses, geomorphology and historic river channel migration, elevation and inundation frequency, detailed soils survey, remnant vegetation communities, special status species, bird counts and

nonnative mammal survey. Restoration recommendations were detailed for each of the tracts.

Brendan expressed concern over the degree to which the written reports sound absolute and do not express the other factors to be considered before a restoration plan is finished. He asked whether the baseline analyses address the natural processes needed to sustain active restoration over time. Gregg responded that the analyses include short-term support for sustaining the habitat.

Armand Gonzales asked whether there are interim restoration steps that can be taken since restoration is limited by the availability of funds. Gregg responded that habitat restoration tends to require either a full effort to jump in all the way or a delay since a halt of agriculture without further restoration, for example, causes the invasive weeds to take over.

Don asked whether the right species wouldn't find their way to the restoration sites over 15 to 20 years. Gregg noted that some sites demonstrate that the desired species don't establish even in 30 years by natural regeneration. Kelly noted that the factor of elevation can help determine whether natural regeneration will succeed.

Brendan inquired about the techniques used to conduct small mammal surveys. Gregg answered that trapping and owl pellet analysis will result in additional small mammal information after this season.

Public Comment

Ladybug mentioned her experience that mass grazing followed by introduction of seed can control star thistle. Gregg responded that cottonwoods in a setting with a lower water table require temporary irrigation and that star thistle control is not, by itself, sufficient to restore habitat.

Pat Kittle questioned whether anything ought to be planted that would not grow naturally. He also advocated for sport wildlife habitat and for vegetation to take care of nutrients and cover for that wildlife. Gregg responded that animal needs and recreation access will be included as planning proceeds. Pat closed with an observation that the river bank southeast of the Ward property is starting to give way and that river movement should be anticipated.

Joan asked Gregg for confirmation that EDAW will consider the Ward property baseline analysis as a starting point. Gregg assured her that she is correct.

Butch suggested that Ayres look closely at all points where the outside bend of the river comes close to the levee to get a sense of what to expect.

Next Agenda and Next Steps

Burt and Armand stated that food sources to meet wildlife needs should be part of the analyses. Burt also suggested that the hydraulic study should look at the rock revetment areas.

Gregg responded that there are some resources to address new questions as the hydraulic analysis proceeds.

Interim steps:

Gregg and Burt will report on the status of the GNP at the April 3 AW meeting. The AW agreed to discuss ways at the April meeting that it can include consideration of landowner assurances issues in its work.

Gregg will also ask Greg Golet to talk with the AW at its April meeting regarding wildlife food sources and displacement during restoration.

Next Meetings:

Date: April 3, 2006

Time: 10-2

Location: TBD

Agenda Topics:

- GNP – issues and options
 - How does AW incorporate what it can into CSP process?
- Wildlife food sources and displacement

Date: May 1, 2006

Time: 10-2

Location: TBD

Topics:

- Reviews of Studies
 - Fiscal/Economic
 - Pest and regulation impacts
 - Recreation
- Baseline analyses of the remaining properties